(c) Depending upon the registered demand in different areas new exchanges are opened or the capacity of existing exchanges is expanded.

New Post Offices in Assam

11. SHRIMATI BASANTI SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

'(a) whether it is a fact that a few new post offices have been sanctioned during the current financial year for Assam; and

(b) if so, the details and number of new post offices sanctioned for both urban and rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VAR-MA): (a) New Post Offices have not yet been sanctioned for Assam Postal Circle.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Telephone facility at Panchayat Headquarters

12. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the decision taken earlier to provide telecommunication facility at each Panchayat Headquarter in the country is being implemented satisfactorily;

(b) if so, the progress made so far in this regard with particular reference to the North-Eastern States;

(c) if not, by when the above facilities are likely to be - provided to all the Panchayat Headquarters;

(d) whether Government have reduced the budgetory allocation under the Head 'Village Panchayat Telephone' for' the current year; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VAR-MA): (a) Yes Sir, The Department has enhanced the policy to cover all the villages of the country in the Panchayat villages.

(b) The status of total villages covered upto 7.11.97 is given in the statement (see *below).* As regards NE Region, the following is the status:—

Assam Circle:— Out of 2485 Village Panchayats, 2093 have been covered.

North East Circle:— Out of 4347 village Panchayats, 2370 have been covered.

State	Total No. of Panchayat	Panchayats with Telephone
Arunachal Pradesh	944	365
Manipur	429	359
Meghalaya	450	415
Mizoram	613	429
Nagaland	1001	387
Tripura	910	415
Total	4347	2370

(c) It is expected to cover all the Panchayat Headquarters in North East States by the end of IXth Five Year Plan.

(d) and (e) There is no reduction in the Budgetary allocation for this programme. The Government has granted Rs. 498 Crores under Cash and Rs. 200 Crores under Lease Procurement for the Village Public Telephone Programme this year.

Statement

Annexure

Village Public Telephone Programme Status on 7.11.97

Circles	Total village on 1.4.97 A	Achivement 97-98 upto 7.11. E	Cumulative villages covered G
1. Andman & Nicobar	292	12	123
2. Andhra Pradesh	29460	505	21777
3. Assam	22224	1277	91141
4. Bihar	79208	720	16289
5. Gujarat	18125	0	13923
6. Himachal Pradesh	16997	412	6543
7. Haryana	7018	33	5487
8. Jammu & Kashmir	6453	17	2070
9. Karnataka	27024	541	18022
10. Kerala	1530	0	1530
11. Madhya Pradesh	71526	355	35722
12. Maharashtra	40430	1148	27589
13. North-East	14197	109	3245
14. Orissa	46989	806	16979
15. Punjab	13252	682	12689
16. Rajasthan	37889	404	17729
17. Tamil Nadu	20196	1040	18078
18. U.P. (East)	75462	2187	25581
19. U.P. (West)	37106	406	14363
20. West Bengal	38337	339	11324
21. Calcutta	468	22	443
22. Delhi	191	0	191
Total	604374	11015	278847

All villages covered in Kerala & Delhi.
Gujarat Circle's remaining villages to be covered by reliance.

डाक कर्मचारियों को ग्रामीम क्षेत्रों में प्रदान की जाने वाली सुविधाएं

13. **चोधरी हरमोहन सिंह यादव**: क्या संचार मंत्री यह बातने की कृपा करेंगे कि;

(क) देश के ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में डाक बांटने का कार्य करने वाले कर्मचारियों का ब्यौरा क्या है, उन्हें क्या-क्या सुविधाएं प्रदान की गई है और उनका वेतनमान क्या है;

(ख) क्या यह सच है कि हम कर्मचारियों के ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में डाक बांटने के कार्य के संबंध में किसी प्रकार का असंतोष है; यदी हां, तो वह अंसतोष क्या है;

बांटने वाले इन कर्मचारियों के कार्य से लोगों को अनेक शिकायतें हैं; यदि हां, तो उन शिकायतों का ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ङ) सरकार ने उनकी समस्याओं का समाधान करने के लिए क्या कदम उठाए हैं?

संचार मंत्री (श्री बैनी प्रसाद वर्मा): (क) से (घ) 31.3.97 की स्थिति के अनुसार देश के ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में डाक वितरण का कार्य 79880 अतिरिक्त विभागीय एजेंटों द्वारा किया जाता है। अतिरिक्त विभागीय वितरण एजेंटों को देय मासिक भत्तों की अनुमोदित दरें